

## Message Text

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20

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04

CEA-01 AGR-05 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 PM-04

/094 W

----- 094465

R 021849Z DEC 76

FM AMEMASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1728

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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DEPT INFORM AMBASSADOR THEBERGE

SAN SALVADOR INFORM AGATT

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, ETRD, PINT, NU, XK

SUBJECT: SENGLMANN'S HANDLING OF NICARAGUAN COFFEE RUST OUTBREAK

REF: MANAGUA 5520, MANAGUA 5545

BEGIN SUMMARY. AGRMIN SENGLMANN SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT  
POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS FROM RECENTLY DISCOVERED COFFEE BLIGHT IN  
NICARAGUA. COFFEE EXPORTS IN 1977 COULD EXCEED VALUE OF COTTON  
EXPORTS FOR FIRST TIME IN RECENT MEMORY. SENGLMANN HOPEFUL OTHER  
CACM COUNTRIES WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO QUARANTINE NICARAGUA BY BARRING  
ENTRY OF NICARAGUAN AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS. HIS  
HANDLING OF CRISIS SO FAR HAS BEEN SUPERB EXAMPLE OF HIS ORGANIZATIONAL  
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ABILITY AND SUBTLE POLITICAL ADROITNESS. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING DECEMBER 1 CALL AT EMBASSY ON OTHER MATTERS, AGRICULTURE MINISTER SENGELMANN EXPRESSED HIS SERIOUS CONCERN OVER OUTBREAK OF COFFEE RUST WHICH HE HAD ANNOUNCED NOVEMBER 30 (REFTEL). IN PRESENCE OF LOCAL CATTLEMEN AND OF DR. CARLOS MEYER AREVALO, SALVADORAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OIRSA (CENTRAL AMERICAN PLANT DISEASE CONTROL BODY), SENGELMANN SAID GON WILL DO ALL THAT IT CAN TO WIPE OUT THIS BLIGHT AND TO PREVENT ITS SPREAD.

2. SENGELMANN NOTED THAT, UNLIKE A "CERTAIN COUNTRY", WHICH HAD TRIED TO SUPPRESS INFO ON OUTBREAK OF A PLANT DISEASE, GON HAD, AT HIS INSISTENCE, MADE FACTS KNOWN AS SOON AS EXISTENCE OF RUST IN NICARAGUAN COFFEE PLANTATIONS HAD BEEN CONFIRMED. THIS WAS DONE IN FULL REALIZATION THAT OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES MIGHT CLOSE THEIR FRONTIERS TO NICARAGUAN FOOD, AND PERHAPS EVEN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS. SENGELMANN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DISCOVERY OF COFFEE RUST POSES A POTENTIAL BLOW TO ALL CENTRAL AMERICA, NOT JUST TO NICARAGUA, BUT HOPED THAT NICARAGUA'S CACM PARTNERS WOULD NOT TAKE PRECIPITATE ACTION AGAINST NICARAGUAN EXPORTS.

3. MINISTER NOTED THAT MEETING OF OIRSA AND CENTRAL AMERICAN MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE WOULD BE CONVOKED SOONEST TO CONSIDER COORDINATED MEASURES TO COMBAT BLIGHT. HE ALSO MENTIONED HE WOULD BE CONSULTING WITH SALVADORAN MINISTER AGRICULTURE LATER THAT MORNING IN THIS REGARD.

4. AS AN INDICATION OF IMPORTANCE OF COFFEE EXPORTS TO NICARAGUAN ECONOMY, SENGELMANN SAID VALUE OF COFFEE EXPORTS IN 1977 SHOULD RACH BETWEEN \$160 AND \$170 MILLION, THUS SURPASSING ESTIMATED VALUE OF 1977 COTTON EXPORTS, \$160 MILLION. HE NOTED THAT WHILE BLIGHT, IF NOT ELIMINATED OR CONTROLLED, WOULD SERIOUSLY AFFECT FUTURE COFFEE PRODUCTION, CURRENT 1976/77 CROP NOW BEING HARVESTED WILL BE LITTLE AFFECTED. (SENGELMANN'S ESTIMATE OF VALUE OF 1976/77 COFFEE CROP EXCEEDS THAT WHICH WE HAD CALCULATED EARLIER, I.E. ABOUT \$120 MILLION. WE HAVE NO REASON, HOWEVER, TO CONTEST HIS LATER ESTIMATE SINCE COFFEE PRICES HAVE BEEN RISING INTERNATIONAL MARKETS.)

5. COMMENT: SENGELMANN'S LOW-KEY PRESENTATION TO US, AS WAS CASE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH HIS EARLIER PRESS CONFERENCE, WAS DOUBTLESS AIMED IN PART AT GIVING A FAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF HIS FORTHRIGHTNESS AND QUIET EFFECTIVENESS. HIS INCLUSION OF OIRSA REPRESENTATIVE AND SEVERAL NICARAGUANS IN HIS EMBASSY DISCUSSION WAS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO SHOW BOTH THAT HE WAS DETERMINED TO TACKLE BLIGHT PROBLEM (AND US MEAT IMPORT POLICIES, MANAGUA 5545) HEAD ON, AND THAT HE HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE AMERICANS. SENGELMANN'S HANDLING OF PRESENT CRISIS TO DATE DOES, INDEED, FURTHER IMPRESS US AS TO HIS ORGANI-

ZATIONAL ABILITIES AND POLITICAL ADROITNESS.  
RUBENSTEIN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** COFFEE, PLANT DISEASES  
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**Draft Date:** 02 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** powellba  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 MANAGUA 5520, 76 MANAGUA 5545  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** powellba  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 JUL 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 JUL 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by powellba>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SENEGALMANN'S HANDLING OF NICARAGUAN COFFEE RUST OUTBREAK  
**TAGS:** EAGR, EPAP, ETRD, PINT, NU, XK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006